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## PSYCHOLOGICAL LITERATURE.

*Psychology: An Introductory Study of the Structure and Function of Human Consciousness*, by JAMES ROWLAND ANGELL. Henry Holt & Co., New York, 1904. pp. vii, 402.

The prompt and generous welcome already accorded Professor Angell's book, both by psychologists and teachers of psychology, removes the necessity for a review, in the primary sense of the term. The writer will therefore pass at once to matters of appreciation and criticism.

The *Psychology* gives evidence of two broad lines of influence, one of which, at least, all writers on general psychology since the eighties have felt as a constant inspiration and have acknowledged as a common debt. The first influence derives from the earlier writings of William James, and the second may be traced to the widespread tendency to apply to psychological problems the principles and the methods of organic evolution. The two influences are, by no means, entirely distinct; for *The Principles of Psychology* reveals a keen and irrepressible interest in physiology, and it tends, moreover, constantly to view the human mind in the light of the needs and functions, past and present, of the animal organism. The more specific attempt, however, to rewrite psychology in terms of biology may be traced to a protestant movement, both within and without psychology, which has been particularly active in the last decade. As the first general result of this movement, Angell's *Psychology* bears a special significance.

The author's standpoint and its distinction from physiological psychology are plainly set forth in the following passages taken from the introductory chapter. "Psychology takes for itself a certain definite domain, *i. e.*, consciousness as a life process." "In our study of mental processes we shall adopt the biological point of view just now dominant in psychology, and regard consciousness . . . as one among many manifestations of organic life, to be understood properly only when regarded in connection with life phenomena." "Our adoption of the biological point of view . . . will mean not only that we shall study consciousness in connection with physiological processes wherever possible, but it will also mean that we shall regard all the operations of consciousness . . . as so many expressions of organic adaptations to our environment. . . . To the biologist an organism represents a device for executing movements in response to the stimulations and demands of the environment." "Mind seems to be the master device by means of which these adaptive operations of organic life may be made most perfect. We shall consequently attempt to see in what particulars the various features of consciousness contribute to this adaptive process."

The two kinds of psychology, structural and functional, are now generally recognized; but the author's assertion that "psychologists have hitherto devoted the larger part of their energy to investigating the *structure* of the mind," will come as something of a shock,—especially to those psychologists who have looked in vain through the history of the science for a consistent and systematic account of consciousness from the 'structural' point of view. It should be said,

however, that the author seems to take the term not in the more usual sense of James's original distinction between structure and function (*Mind*, O. S., IX, 18-19; *Prin.* I, 478), but, negatively, as any aspect of mind not included under *organic* function.

It is a curious fact that psychology has resisted, so far as it has, the allurements of organic evolution. Ethics, sociology, anthropology, and even the history of religion, seem to have been more profoundly modified by the 'biological method.' Certain writers—notably English and, to some extent, French psychologists—and isolated problems, such as the nature of emotion and of space-perception, have, it is true, strongly felt the influence; but a concerted movement in the direction of biological interpretation of the adult human consciousness has only recently been organized. This movement must, of course, not be confounded with 'genetic' psychology of the ordinary type. Ever since Darwin, the developmental psychology of the child, of animal forms, and of the race at large, has had a steady following; but, until recently, no one except Herbert Spencer has, so far as I recall, succeeded in writing a general account of the typical human mind in terms of current biology. Spencer's *Principles* was ably and skillfully done, and it has, without doubt, exerted a strong influence upon popular thinking; but we must remember that it was done over fifty years ago and that it therefore escaped the vast burden of facts that is laid upon more recent writers of psychological text-books and treatises.

The fundamental question is, what does the 'biological point of view' yield for psychology? It may, without hesitation, be conceded that the point of view furnishes a short-cut to 'human values,' and, therefore, to the various fields of psychological application. Mind is, for the biologist, an 'activity,' and it is, as Angell says, "mental activity, rather than mental structure, which has immediate significance for thought and conduct." More than this, it is a subject of common remark that various dependent sciences and arts have grown weary while waiting to share in the benefits of psychological research. In some instances they may be said to have waited on the strength of promises, overt or implied, in other cases sheer want seems to have counseled patience, while again, the psychologist's confidence in his own methods and his distrust in the practical utility of older systems may also have served to maintain high expectations; but, on the other hand, it must not be forgotten that hasty and rash applications, gross ignorance of method, and an underestimation of the complexity and the subtlety of mind have, in the hands of 'practical' persons, played their large part in deferring and in defeating hope. Let the fault fall where it may, great expectations there were that have not been fulfilled. The result is natural. "Patience is a composing but lean dietary," and it seems, in the present case, likely to be exchanged for what at least promises to offer a more substantial ration.

How far psychology should look outside and beyond itself, for ends and motives, is difficult to decide. It is impossible for any science to strike a steady balance between self-love and benevolence. The history of organized knowledge shows a constant interplay of the two springs of action. The world's needs have, in turn, fostered, and been fostered by 'pure science.' Purity' itself has meant both productivity and sterility, germinative power and seediness, academic breadth and cloistered formalism. Training, method and undivided purpose are of greater importance than the end. As Herbart somewhere puts it: "*Geduld und frischer Muth ist die Hauptsache.*"

Whatever its achievements for thought and conduct, the biological point of view in psychology is to be criticised on the score both of

precision and of method. What it gains in the solution of practical and specifically human problems, it loses in its disregard for carefully collected facts.

The psychological research of the last twenty years is, for example, in the work under discussion, mentioned with striking infrequency. Experimental work, in particular, is almost wholly lacking. This is explained, perhaps, by the fact that the psychology of 'mental activity' regards 'experimental psychology,' not as a *method*, to be used wherever possible in careful observation, but as a co-ordinate *branch* of the science,—a branch which may, therefore, be largely neglected in a general 'introductory study of human consciousness.'

In 'place of concrete experimental data, the method discusses the 'nature,' the 'salient characteristics,' the 'distinguishable features,' the 'phases' of mental experiences or mental 'operations,' supplementing its discussion of these 'more important elements' of consciousness by tracing "the genesis and function of the process in the individual or the race."<sup>1</sup> Thus sections are devoted to the definition, the analysis, the genesis, the development and the general function of perception, to the definition, the analysis, the genesis and function of imagination, etc. The most characteristic part of the treatment is the more specifically 'functional' part. But the functions are described in quite general and, for the most part, superficial terms. They seem, to the present writer, to have a popular (or at most a biological) rather than a psychological value. I give illustrations. "The first and basic function of perception, then, is to afford us our primary knowledge of a world of objects amid which we have to live." "The function of sensation is to furnish us with the elementary symbols of the various things in the world about us. . . ." The 'acts' involved in emotion and instinct are or were 'means toward the realization of some end,' and attention is a discriminating and combining faculty that performs the 'actual work of accommodation' in the adjustments of the organism. Similarly, the genetic references are, as a rule, vague or general; they are made, *e.g.*, to 'the new-born babe,' or 'the outset of life,' or 'the young child,' or 'the infant consciousness,' to the 'animal consciousness' or to 'racial experiences.' If genetic psychology is to furnish the pattern for general psychology, surely the best and the most accurate genetic psychology is none too good! A science may well hesitate to adopt a method which comes to its chief issue in naïve generalizations partly common to all psychologies and partly borrowed from a neighboring science.<sup>2</sup>

The primary difficulties of the method are two. First, the method involves a contradiction. It assumes that mind is an evolutionary agent, that, 'consciousness tends to appear where the reflex and hereditary responses of the organism are inadequate to cope with the demands of the environment; that 'consciousness is a systematizing, unifying activity; that mind is 'an engine for accomplishing the most remarkable adjustments of the organism to its life conditions.' At the same time, the method warns us against believing that, in one form of nervous action, 'the mind suddenly produces changes in the nerves' (*sic*), while, in another form, it does not; and the reader is told most positively that to say: "the mind might in a wholly unique manner step in and bring about changes in the action of the nervous system" is but to use metaphor. Now consciousness is either a cause

<sup>1</sup> It should be pointed out that the terms 'process' and 'element' are used in the book in a quite untechnical sense.

<sup>2</sup> An alternative mode of introducing evolutionary arguments and conclusions, into psychology, is by way of illustration and corollary. Sully, *e.g.*, considers, in fine print and foot-note, the biological interpretation of attention, action and feeling. (J. Sully: *The Human Mind*, 1892, I, 78; II, 203.)

(as natural science uses the term), or it is not. If it is, it needs no apology; if it is not, it *has* no 'biological function,' and its use as a cloak to cover the biologist's ignorance of evolutionary processes is unjustified. Functions mind may still have, but not of the biological sort.

Secondly, the method gives no systematic account of its functions. Consciousness, it affirms, is full of 'acts' and 'activities,' but it fails to organize these. Attention is, to be sure, an 'organizing activity,' engaged in the 'double process of pulling apart and putting together,' but interest, also, 'represents the spontaneous, dynamic side of our psychical make-up;' and, again, the self is 'the knower annealing the various elements of our experiments into some sort of unity,' while 'will' is 'the whole mind active.' What, now, are the interrelations of all these sovereign powers? and how are attention, interest, and the rest, related to such functions as perception, reasoning and imagination, and also to *their* functions? Some principle of classification and subordination there must be in a psychology which treats consciousness as organic; something better, I mean, than the traditional knowing, feeling and willing, or the 'three ultimate modes of being conscious of an object.' Is it to be found in the work which consciousness does? in the objects with which it has to do? or in the natural history of the developing mind itself? Surely, a definitive account of mental functions and their genesis cannot be given without some principle which shall insure organic coherence and organic unity to the multitudinous 'activities' that mind reveals.

I have already referred to the wide welcome which Professor Angell's text-book has received. This welcome is sufficient evidence, not only that a book of the character was needed, but also that the author has been successful in his attempt to satisfy the need. Its sanctions for success are not hard to find. Its author is both psychologist and teacher; it is well and attractively written; it fills a place not otherwise filled in the literature, and it appeals to a dominant interest in the student of life and of human nature. Where I have criticised it has been criticism of standpoint and of method. I have only praise for the clear, straightforward and sincere development of the doctrine of consciousness considered as a phenomenon of life.

#### I. MADISON BENTLEY.

*Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology*, written by many hands and edited by James Mark Baldwin. Vol. 3. Bibliography of Philosophy, Psychology and Cognate Subjects, compiled by Benjamin Rand. The Macmillan Co., New York; Macmillan & Co., London. In two parts. 1905. Price \$10. pp. xxv, 542; vii, 543-1192.

The long-awaited bibliography which forms the third and concluding volume of Baldwin's *Dictionary* appears in two parts, bound uniformly with the first two volumes, approximating them in bulk (1192 as against 1536 pp.), and costing together as much as they cost at the date of their first issue. A Prefatory Note by the general editor states that the bibliographical lists extend to 1902. The compiler's Preface indicates the sources, aims and scope of the work.

"The book as a whole is entitled a 'Bibliography of Philosophy,'"—so the compiler begins, in opposition to his title-page,—"and it will be found to comprise a series of bibliographies, including the History of Philosophy, Systematic Philosophy, Logic, Ästhetics, Philosophy of Religion, Ethics and Psychology." "Between the methods of a complete compilation and of a descriptive commentary of philosophical works a golden mean has been sought. On the one hand the bibliography, though not exhaustive, aims to be comprehensive in its scope. From beginning to end the endeavor has been to